DOCUMENT RESUME

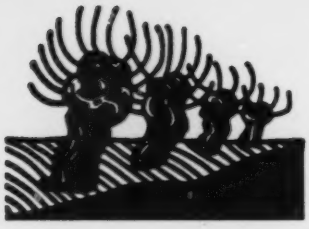
ED 360 237 SO 023 251

TITLE	British Perspectives on Peace Education and Its Difficulties: [Conversations With Helen Collinson, Mildred Masheder, Chris Sewell, Patricia White, and The Project "Preparedness for Peace." Educational and Psychological Interactions No. 100.
INSTITUTION	Lund Univ. (Sweden). Malmo School of Education.
REPORT NO	ISSN-0070-9263
PUB DATE	Jan 90
NOTE	41p.
PUB TYPE	Information Analyses (070) -- Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Civil Liberties; Conflict Resolution; Educational Philosophy; Elementary Secondary Education; Foreign Countries; Higher Education; International Cooperation; *International Education; International Educational Exchange; Interviews; *Peace; Teacher Education; *Teaching Experience; Teaching Methods; War
IDENTIFIERS	*Great Britain; Nonviolence; *Peace Education

ABSTRACT

The project group "Preparedness for Peace," at the Malmo School of Education (Sweden), studies possible ways of helping children and young people to deal constructively with questions of peace and war. As part of this work, the project group conducts interviews with people engaged in the problems of peace education. This publication presents conversations with four people from Great Britain--Helen Collinson, Mildred Masheder, Chris Sewell, and Patricia White--who have all been professionally involved in activities related to peace education. (Author)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****



Department of Educational and Psychological Research

School of Education Malmö • Lund University
Box 23501, S-200 45 Malmö, Sweden

ED360237

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
AKE BJERSTEDT
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

British perspectives on peace education and its difficulties

HELEN COLLINSON
MILDRED MASHEDER
CHRIS SEWELL
PATRICIA WHITE
THE PROJECT "PREPAREDNESS FOR PEACE"

Educational and Psychological Interactions **No. 100**
ISSN 0070-9263 JANUARY 1990

SO 023 251

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

BRITISH PERSPECTIVES ON PEACE EDUCATION AND ITS DIFFICULTIES

Helen Collinson
Mildred Masheder
Chris Sewell
Patricia White
and
The Project "Preparedness for Peace"

Collinson, H., Masheder, M., Sewell, C., White, P. & The Project "Preparedness for Peace". British perspectives on peace education and its difficulties. Educational and Psychological Interactions (Malmö, Sweden: School of Education), No. 100, 1990

The project group "Preparedness for Peace", at the Malmö School of Education, studies possible ways of helping children and young people to deal constructively with questions of peace and war. As part of the work, the project group conducts interviews with people engaged in the problems of peace education.

This publication presents conversations with four people from Great Britain - Helen Collinson, Mildred Masheder, Chris Sewell, and Patricia White - who have all been professionally involved in activities related to peace education. - Interviewer: Åke Bjerstedt.

Keywords: Arms trade, conflict resolution, cooperation, democracy, disarmament, Great Britain, history, human rights, interviews, multi-cultural education, non-violence, nuclear warfare, peace education, philosophy, political education, teacher education, teaching methods.

PEACE EDUCATION: A CONVERSATION WITH HELEN COLLINSON, CAAT DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION PROJECT ("CAMPAIGN AGAINST ARMS TRADE"), LONDON

1.

AB: As an introduction, could you say a few words about yourself and your interest in the field of "peace education"?

HC: In some ways I am quite new to the area of peace education. I was trained as a history teacher, although I was very active in the peace movement, mainly in the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. I did some work with young people around that issue but not in schools. So my interest in peace education in school has been more recent. When I was trained as a teacher, I was angry about some of the ways in which history was taught. So I am interested in alternative views of history and in some ways peace education fits into that.

I have been working here at CAAT ("the Campaign Against Arms Trade") for nearly a year, and I am involved in a three-year project. We are looking at peace education in a broad sense in the community, working with local groups.

AB: Could you say a little more about this project of yours?

HC: CAAT has set up a Development Education Project with me as a full-time worker. When we are looking at the arms trade there is a lot of overlap between development education and peace education. We are being funded by Christian Aid, Oxfam, Quaker groups and others. The work is aimed at people who wouldn't necessarily know anything about the arms trade, so it's really out-reach work about what is a very complex issue: the effects of the arms trade on the Third World and on development.

So I have been concentrating on producing materials, aimed at people who don't know much about it. I have produced a slide-tape overview of the British arms trade, which is 30 minutes long and gives a picture

of how the arms trade works, the effects on the third world, the effects on the employment in Britain. I have also produced a poster exhibition, which is intended for people who might have a bit of space in their colleges or school. It has got fairly few details on it. It's just presenting a few basic facts to generate interest.

Primarily these are aimed at adults but we hope that young people in youth groups and schools might also use them. And I have been to a couple of schools to show the slide-tape. We are concentrating on basic introductory materials for a range of target groups, because the arms trade is quite a specialized issue, it's not like the more well-known nuclear issue. People really aren't aware of how it works.

AB: What kind of message would you especially emphasize?

HC: We tend to emphasize the moral issues, the fact that Britain sells a lot of arms to human rights violators: to Chile, South Africa, Iran, Iraq, and to all sorts of countries which have a lot of poverty in the third world. It's not just a moral issue, however, it's self-interest, because the arms trade means damage to Britain as well, and it's actually adding to un-employment, and makes it more difficult to put money in other areas, such as education or health.

AB: Is this an issue that is publicly much debated in Great Britain at the present time?

HC: I don't think it's much talked about. People don't realize the extent of government involvement. But I think our messages are now gaining ground.

2.

AB: <u>What do you think of first when you hear the words "peace education"</u>?

HC: Three or four years ago I would have thought about the bomb and the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. But having talked more to others and having been involved in groups of peace education workers, I have developed a different view. I think peace education should be

quite a wide topic really, and I certainly think it should include people's personal relationships and not just relate to the international situation. It should deal with the international context, what goes on in the local community, in the school and in people's personal minds.

ÅB: What would be some of the aims that you should try to reach in this kind of peace education in school?

HC: Cooperation, tolerance, and understanding of each others' differences would be part of the aims. I think the multi-cultural work that is common in schools in Britain is very important in peace education. There have been racial conflicts and also a lot of sexism in school and in the society, and I think that peace education needs to take on the issues of multi-cultural education and anti-sexist work alongside international understanding.

ÅB: Would peace education for you include not only knowledge but also attitudes and values?

HC: Yes.

3.

ÅB: <u>If you think back on your own school days, were there some aspects in your schooling that might be considered an attempt at "peace education</u>"?

HC: No. Nothing at all.

ÅB: You said when we started that you were angry about the way history was taught. Could you expand a little on that?

HC: I think there are now some interesting initiatives going on. You might have come across the World Studies Project. But so far that hasn't really entered into most schools. When I was in quite an ordinary, traditional secondary school, I was being asked to teach about a series of battles without any questions asked - that was history, there was no alternative to that; and it was very difficult for me, on my own, to break out of that.

4.

ÅB: Do you believe that schools in your country, as you know them today, contribute to a "peace education"?

HC: I don't think you can generalize. As you have probably heard, quite a few local education authorities now have peace education advisors, and there are lots of individual teachers with energy who are doing some great work. But there is a real phobia about the term "peace education" in this country, and the Tory government has stirred things up, more or less clearly indicating that peace education is nurturing communism. So peace educators have not had any support from the Department of Education and from the government.

Another thing is that the situation in schools for teachers has grown worse and worse. They have to work much longer hours, there are many more pressures on them, so it is so hard for any new initiatives to come in, and it is very difficult for organizations like us to arrange training sessions about the arms trade or about other developments; the teachers can't get time off.

ÅB: Is there a difference in policies in this area between different parties?

HC: I think a labour government would be more sympathetic. How much positive support in terms of finances they would give, I don't know. But they certainly wouldn't try to clamp down on it which is what the Tory government has been doing.

5.

ÅB: Do you think it is at all possible for schools to contribute to a "peace education"? If so, what are some of the steps and measures to be taken that you think of first?

HC: Yes, it is possible. I put a lot of emphasis on methods in my teaching. I think it is very difficult to introduce things like peace education into a classroom where you have the teacher at the front of the classroom totally controlling the children. So I put

a lot of emphasis on group work, on giving the children more autonomy, the freedom to explore areas that they are interested in, breaking down the horrible powers that teachers have. Obviously this should be carried out within a controlled environment, not in just total anarchy. But the way classrooms normally are organized needs to be changed. There is increasing group work in schools now, because industry is realizing that you actually have to learn the skills working with other people. So cooperation and giving the people self-esteem are important. I think you have to build up people's autonomy in environments where people can help each other. The help should not always come from the teacher.

As to content, the world studies elements which are still almost non-existent in a lot of schools should be emphasized. As a historian I found it incredible that kids sometimes could go through four or five years of schooling without meeting any non-British history. They might spend four years doing only British history, and they would have almost no understanding of geography outside Britain at all. If they did anything outside Britain, it would usually be the U.S. or Europe. Rarely anything else.

AB: What do you think about taking up the more specific questions of peace and war, disarmament etc? Would that be part of peace education as you see it?

HC: Yes, of course. I have not mentioned it, because I was assuming that that was sort of basic groundwork. But I think what runs through my idea is that I do not believe in a very isolated sort of "peace studies" that you work on for example from 3 to 3.30. Instead I would like to see peace education incorporated into geography, into history etc. - If you are studying wars, you would look at all the people who take part and what it means to them and not forget the efforts of people in preventing war. You should neither simplify nor glorify war.

6.

AB: What would be some of the possible differences in peace education approaches among younger and older students in schools?

HC: This is something I am not very competent to talk about, but I tend to feel that it wouldn't be that much different, that the basic methods would be about the same and that it would just be a question of how much content you put into it. I don't think children in the primary school should go into the details of arms trade, for example, but I think with both primary school and secondary school we should use about the same methods in terms of looking at their personal lives and how they cooperate with other people in their peer groups. Mildred Masheder has described lots of activities for younger children in her book "Let's cooperate". Similar approaches could be adapted also to older students.

AB: Has there been some discussion here about avoiding some aspects of peace education with younger children?

HC: There was a lot of discussion when the nuclear issue was very big here, that you should not scare children by talking about these things. Of course, everybody was scared and young children were very scared by the information they picked up from sources other than the teacher. But instead of bringing the anxieties out into the open and discussing them, there was a tendency to hush the whole thing up, to protect children from this issue. This was not very well thought through.

I think it is crucial that we do peace education in primary schools when children are less turned off from education. Children by the secondary school age often resent school and the control that goes on there and therefore are much less prepared to take part in activities. If we want to try to increase cooperation and international understanding, it's much easier to do that in primary school than it is in secondary. When I was

talking about the arms trade or what was going on in the third world, secondary school students often seemed to feel: I don't want to hear about this, I am not interested in the third world, I am not interested in the arms trade, I am only interested in motor bikes etc. You often really feel a resistance, but you don't find that in primary schools so much.

7.

AB: If you were an upper-secondary school teacher in a subject with which you are particularly familiar, how would you like to make the students more conscious of and more prepared for problems of peace, within that subject?

HC: History is my main subject. In any history I am teaching I am trying to get away from this isolation business: history should not be seen in isolation from other things. History is just what happened before in our lives and everybody's lives. So I'd be interested in teaching the history which is the people's own history for a start. How did war affect people's parents? - is a very important question. I once asked a class to go back and ask their grandparents about what happened in the war, particularly how the women had felt about it. By doing so, you get a very different impression of what war means. It wasn't all triumph and victory, the Second World War; it was fear and hardships. That was really brought home to kids when they talked to people who actually lived through this.

Empathy is a key word for history teachers at the moment, so when we discussed the experiences that people had written down from their grandparents, we also did some role playing on this material. Also it is important to relate what is going on in the world today to the past so that the international wars that we study from the past aren't totally dislocated from the world we live in today. I think that people need to have a feeling of where they come

from and how the world became as it is, and history could play an important part in that. I think young people today are very worried about war to a large extent, particularly nuclear war, so I think it's important to look at the roots of how the present situation has come about.

8.

AB: In international debates, the terms "disarmament education" and "peace education" have been used, in addition to some other related terms ("global education", "education for international understanding" etc.). Do you have any comments and preferences as to this terminology?

HC: Not really, because I don't think the terminology is that important. I want peace education to be open to what's happening in development education, in multicultural and anti-sexist education, so it would have to be a term that would be flexible enough to incorporate those issues. I think I would probably favor an expression that had the word "global" in it, but I don't have strong views on that.

AB: Is it true that the term "peace education" is quite controversial in your country?

HC: Yes, it is. Peace education has been seen by many as biased and leftist because of the massive smear campaign organized by the government and right-wing groups against CND and peace education.

AB: Is the term "disarmament education" used here?

HC: No, not really.

9.

AB: In many countries, questions related to disarmament and peace are highly controversial. Would you anticipate any difficulties, for example with parents or other members of the community, when introducing peace education in schools? If so, what kind of difficulties? Do you see any way out of such problems?

HC: My answer would relate to my more general views about how school should operate. I think that in this country parents don't really have much to do with education. Most of them had a horrible school experience themselves and keep away from school, and they get a very mixed impression from their children of what's going on there.

I think that if the parents were encouraged to come into school more, to have a say in what their children were learning and to talk more to teachers, then there wouldn't be so much misunderstanding. Schools are still very much closed institutions. In London gradually schools are being used more for other education and other activities, but it's a slow process. I think our schools should be more like sort of community centers. With more contact with education, people would be more open to new developments in education.

The difficulties with peace education are the ones I've already indicated. That's why I think it's good to gradually introduce it into different subjects.

10.

AB: What needs to be done in teacher training in order to prepare future teachers more adequately for the area of "peace education"?

HC: Firstly to talk about peace education. It wasn't mentioned at all in my teacher training course. There should be specific training sessions on peace education as there are on multi-cultural education and anti-sexist education. Peace education is seen as a very peripheral issue still connected with CND. I think it would be helpful for teachers if peace education was seen as a broader area, actually as a support for them in the classroom - how to deal with conflict in the classroom, how to sort out fights between children. If there was a more practical approach to peace education, I think teacher training and teachers would be more open to incorporate it.

AB: Would in-service training also be needed here?

HC: Yes, very much so.

AB: Is that done to some extent?

HC: To some extent, but it's getting quite difficult here to increase in-service training.

11.

AB: Is there anything else that you would like to add about the school and peace education?

HC: I might like to comment on the word school in this context. I think that peace education and development education have been too much confined to schools, and I'd like to see moves made to broaden the catchment areas for peace education to include people doing part-time courses at community centers and adult education centers and youth groups etc. Television also provides educational opportunities. My project is an attempt to reach beyond school.

NOTES ON THE INTERVIEWEE INCLUDING UPDATE INFORMATION

Helen Collinson. Address: 259 Sussex Way, London N19, UK.

Education: B.A. Honours Degree in History, York University, 1984. - Postgraduate Certificate in Education (History and Humanities), Sheffield University, 1986.

Professional experience: English teacher in a Palestinian refugee camp, Gaza strip, 1982. - English teacher in Barcelona, Spain, 1984-85. - Development Education Worker, CAAT, Campaign Against Arms Trade, 1986-89. - History teacher, secondary school in London. - Extended visits to Nicaragua (1985 and 1988).

When the interview above was carried out, Helen Collinson was involved in the CAAT education project. This 3-year project finished June 1989. During the final period of the project, Helen Collinson concentrated on the production of two major resources: (1) An illustrated paperback book, entitled "Death on Delivery: The Impact of the Arms Trade on the Third World". (2) A "Classroom Pack" on the arms trade, with activities, discussion ideas and posters for use in secondary schools. - Both can be ordered from CAAT (address: Campaign Against Arms Trade, 11 Goodwin Street, Finsbury Park, London N4 3HQ, UK).

Helen Collinson is also the editor and co-writer of "Frontiers - Women and Revolution in Nicaragua" (to be published in 1990).

PEACE EDUCATION IN SCHOOL: A CONVERSATION WITH MILDRED MASHEDER, LONDON

1.

AB: As an introduction, could you say a few words about yourself and your interest in the field of "peace education"?

MM: I have been interested in what one might call peace education for many years, but I would rather call my interest area development education, including first the foundations for good upbringing and finally for good citizenship. When I was teaching I was very much aware of the importance of relationships. I was teaching mostly in elementary schools at the primary level and also to some extent in secondary schools. (Primary for us is five years old to eleven years old.)

Besides teaching for quite a long time I have also been doing research on the general subject of good education. We were very anxious to challenge the idea of the 11+ examination, that is, the fact that some children were separated from the others at the age of eleven in order to go to schools for the elite. We did a campaign on that. I think the comprehensive school is much more fair to everyone and gives children a better chance of developing.

Then I went into teacher education for the last twenty-odd years dealing with child development. I had the opportunity to specialize in multi-cultural education. People in Britain often didn't understand what was happening in the schools with children from many backgrounds. From there it was a short step to global education. Now that wasn't especially agreed to by the authorities in education. When I tried to get global education on to the syllabus that was refused by the CNAA, which is our degree-awarding body. - There was a lot of global education included in multi-cultural education, however.

Some years ago I got a grant from Rowntrees to do

a study on cooperation, peace and conflict solving with young children. I dealt with the ages from three to eleven. After three years I produced this book, "Let us cooperate", which is selling remarkably well and has been translated for other countries too. It's a very simple book, although it's giving my basic philosophy of education and is presenting various classroom activities. Perhaps I am starting a new book directed towards parents on the same sort of theme.

ÅB: Can you say just briefly something more about the project work behind your book?

MM: I am the regional representative in Europe for The World Council of Curriculum and Instruction (WCCI) that among other things is working in favour of education for peace and social justice. Through that organization I got contacts with many people, and this enabled me to try out and get opinions on various activities in many different countries - mostly via teachers and also via some parents. - After the book was published, I went to a number of workshops with this material, including workshops in Japan, and I feel that it has been a success. Now it's a question of promoting the sales and possibly getting another publisher, a more widely known one, to take over the distribution.

2.

ÅB: <u>What do you think of first when you hear the words "peace education</u>"?

MM: I think of several things: education for real democracy, education for future citizens to be able to make their choices in the world. An awareness of what is going on in the world is an important component. I think also it comprises aspects like being sure of yourself, being confident. It includes the listening process and cooperation.

For me the climate and the atmosphere of the home and the school are very important. I am very much

opposed to much of our educational system at present, because I think it's far too authoritarian, far too prone to make children feel inferior, to make them feel inadequate.

ÅB: You used the expression education for "real" democracy. Can you say something more about that?

MM: I use that because I don't think we educate for democracy at all, even though we might talk about democracy. "Real" here means "in practice". Learning has to be based on activity and personal experience. Much later comes theory. But most schools do not let their children have any personal experience with democratic decision-making. Some schools may from time to time use a mock election, but that is very superficial.

3.

ÅB: If you think back on your own school days, were there some aspects in your schooling that might be considered an attempt at "peace education"?

MM: My school days are rather a long time ago, and I would say "no". There were possibly certain teachers - all females in those days - that tried to promote good relationships. But competition was very basic in the type of ethos and morality that characterized our school.

ÅB: What about global perspectives at that time?

MM: There was in our country - and there still is today - quite a lot of pride in the empire. I am quite amused to note that when I hear "Rule Britannia", there is still a feeling of pride that goes through me. It was indoctrinated into me and my schoolmates that we were the most important people in the world, and that people were fortunate to belong to our empire. My schooling period was from 1922 and onwards.

4.

ÅB: Do you believe that schools in your country, as you know them today, contribute to a "peace education"?

MM: I think the general atmosphere has improved a great deal, especially in the primary school, but I think

our education of today is very often a disaster, especially when you enter our secondary schools.

But I must say that there has been a growing awareness of multi-cultural education, of the need for anti-racism education. We see a growing awareness of the need for world studies and development education, but it started too late, and it has not been as widely applied as it should.

ÅB: What would you say is the general status of peace education here in England?

MM: It is very controversial. The prime minister and two recent ministers of education has explicitly condemned it as indoctrination and political propaganda.

ÅB: So it has not any central backing at all in your country?

MM: Not at all. On the contrary, it has had a tremendous propaganda raised against it.

5.

ÅB: Do you think it is at all possible for schools to contribute to a "peace education"? If so, what are some of the steps and measures to be taken that you think of first?

MM: Yes, I think that it is possible. However, I do not share the view that peace education only means education about disarmament or nuclear issues. Basic to me is that peace education should be good education, where good communication, all sort of exercises with listening techniques (creative listening) are included, as well as problem solving techniques.

I would also like to introduce excercises related to "inner peace" (although I know that this view is not shared by all people in peace education). The spiritual side of children is now completely neglected (and then I do not think about narrow religious education). Children need time to reflect; modern life does not give most of them enough quietness.

Multicultural education with emphasis on cooperation and understanding the other's point of view (using

role play and drama as techniques) would also be important. The idea is to put yourself into the other's shoes, to be able to understand him or her.

Direct approaches to conflict solving I think can begin very early and go on through the years, not attempting to give the children the solutions but to train them to work out their own solutions, to sort out the problems themselves. This is a process of real democracy.

AB: What is your view about directly dealing with questions about peace, war and disarmament in the classroom?

MM: I feel that when we have got that classroom atmosphere of confidence and support that I see as important, the fears that are obviously present even in quite young children will come out. I think that then they will have the courage to ask about these things. However, I do not think that we should start by giving the young children the adult beliefs, the adult modeling of these problem areas.

6.

AB: What would be some of the possible differences in peace education approaches among younger and older students in schools?

MM: My personal interest has very much focused on the young children, among other things because we need to start early. I am sure that one of the differences could be that older students can be more fully exposed to all sides of various political views and be able to learn enough about the facts to be able to form their own opinions. There is so much hidden propaganda in this field, however, that I think that one has to be careful to arrive at a balance. But I think that most of what I have said applies all the way through the school: Communication, listening, inner peace, problem-solving, cooperation, understanding - these are not just for the younger ones.

On the other hand, we have to remember that the

young people are seeing endless examples on television of what is happening in the third world, what is happening in wars, and so one has got to start fight early to give them the other side of things: the hopes and working for peace. One has also to bring them up to be very critical of words and images conveyed by the mass media.

7.

ÅB: If you were an upper-secondary school teacher in a subject with which you are particularly familiar, how would you like to make the students more conscious of and more prepared for problems of peace, within that subject?

MM: I would think that world studies would be my speciality, and there it would be very important to get an inter-disciplinary approach dealing with economics, racism and global perspectives.

8.

ÅB: In international debates, the terms "disarmament education" and "peace education" have been used, in addition to some other related terms ("global education", "education for international understanding" etc.). Do you have any comments and preferences as to this terminology?

MM: There are many more related terms. I am not so keen on "disarmament education", because I think it's a very small aspect. I would like to see the question of the interrelationship between these various subfields be emphasized, for example, between "human rights education" and "education for preserving the planet".

I don't agree too much with the people who feel that we need one great umbrella term for all these aspects. I think at this stage people should be free to feel strongly about various aspects of education and work for them all.

9.

ÅB: In many countries, questions related to disarmament and peace are highly controversial. Would you anticipate any difficulties, for example with parents or other members of the community, when introducing peace education in schools? If so, what kind of difficulties? Do you see any way out of such problems?

MM: We have covered this earlier to some extent. There has been an enormous propaganda in our country saying that peace education is indoctrination. Many parents have believed this. So I think that there are great difficulties. One of the best ways of dealing with this problem is to establish very strong links with the parents.

The parents would often love for the children to be more self-confident, more able to solve their own conflicts and not be involved in so many quarrels, so one way to start is to emphasize these aspects, dealing with conflicts in their own school.

10.

ÅB: What needs to be done in teacher training in order to prepare future teachers more adequately for the area of "peace education"?

MM: My experience of teacher education in our country over the last 20 years has been that the training has been far too removed from the classroom, that it has not been practical enough, that the whole attitude has been "academic". So I feel that one of the aspects to be emphasized in teacher training is the need to be much more aware of the practicality, dealing with what you can do in the classroom. We would also need more emphasis on relationships between persons in the teaching of psychology and in the training in general: Relationships with parents, with authorities, with the head teachers, with the children and of course with other teachers.

ÅB: Now we have been talking about teacher education for

new teachers. Do you have any comments on in-service training?

MM: Well, that's what I'm doing myself. There is a great need for that in peace education, since most teachers have not got any training in this area at all. They have not had any experience with drama etc. One of the aspects I deal with in my own workshops is conflict solving.

11.

AB: Is there anything else that you would like to add about the school and peace education?

MM: I should perhaps say that I don't favour the idea of a separate subject for peace education. It must be something that permeates not only every subject but the whole atmosphere, the climate of the school and the contacts between the school and the community.

NOTES ON THE INTERVIEWEE

Mildred Masheder. Address: Portland Lodge, 75 Belsize Lane, London NW3 5AU, UK.

Education: Whitelands College, London Teacher's Certificate. - Sorbonne Paris, Certificate d'Etudes Françaises. - St. Anne's College, Oxford, Hons. Modern Languages Class II. - University College, London, Post Grad. Diploma in Anthropology. - Institute of Education, Academic Diploma in Education.

Professional experience, for example: 12 years teaching in primary and secondary schools. - 10 years General Secretary of the Council for Children's Welfare. - 20 years Senior Lecturer, Dept. of Education, Poly of North London. Tutor responsible for Child Development and later Multicultural Education and World Studies.

Membership in organizations, for example: World Education Fellowship, council member; World Council for Curriculum and Instruction, European Representative and member of the Board of Directors, European Editor of its journal "Forum"; Peace Pledge Union, committee member of Peace Education Project.

Publications on parent education, television, peace education etc. For example: Let's Co-operate: Activities for parents and teachers of young children. London: Peace Education Project, Peace Pledge Union, 1986.

PEACE EDUCATION: A CONVERSATION WITH CHRIS SEWELL, TEACHERS FOR PEACE, ENGLAND

1.

AB: As an introduction, could you say a few words about yourself and your interest in the field of "peace education"?

CS: I have always been a convinced socialist. I was army officer on compulsory military service, but in recent years I have been very convinced about peace education. If you read the introduction to my children's book "Peace" you will learn about this 13-year-old boy from South Wales, who said to me: "We are not doing Special Reading today, Sir. We are doing about Nuclear War." Fearful for my job from a Conservative minister I didn't say yes or no, I just put out pencils and papers and thought: Well, if they want to do that, they could do what they like if it stimulates them as a small group in reading. They asked me to spell "nuclear" and "Hiroshima", and it was clear they were keen on peace studies. That's how the book started. When I had heard Hilary and George Lipkin, I joined Teachers for Peace, and I also became active in a new organization: Ex-service CND. I was only in the army after the war, but I was really impressed by some of the people who have been in the last war who were now campaigning strongly for peace.

AB: Could you say a little about the status of Teachers for Peace in your country?

CS: It is on its knees. If tomorrow I was to take a thousand pounds and offer it to any teacher in England, to persuade them to join Teachers for Peace, he or she would refuse it. They are so shaken with the reorganization of education and afraid for their jobs, that they would think that I was some kind of an agent trying to bribe them, and if they took a thousand from me they might loose the job that they had. It is that kind of situation in England at the

moment. I anticipate that with Gorbachev and the U.S. president talking, things will get better in a couple of years, but at the moment peace education is at the rock bottom in England. There are only very few people in special schools and special private schools and people like Quakers who are keeping consistently to their beliefs in non-violence.

2.

AB: What do you think of first when you hear the words "peace education"?

CS: Children should have an opportunity of hearing both sides, that is, children should be taught to think and to be able to make up their own minds in a democracy. Before voting young people should really have the opportunity of looking at different sides and dealing with things objectively. There is a new act of parliament in Britain which says: Any controversial matter can only be taught in schools provided it is dealt with objectively and has the approval of the head-master and the governers of the school. I can do that, having been in the forces etc. I have had debates in the sixth form with two sides; I've got people from Peace with NATO and people from CND. So it can be done, but it is designed to frighten teachers from doing anything.

3.

AB: If you think back on your own school days, were there some aspects in your schooling that might be considered an attempt at "peace education"?

CS: No. I went to school in the war, and we had nothing at all related to peace education.

4.

AB: Do you believe that schools in your country, as you know them today, contribute to a "peace education"?

CS: In my opinion, no. A survey published in Lancaster a few years ago gave a more optimistic picture, but

I consider that misleading. Very little is done. Peace studies are considered by the Conservaties as subversive and something that should be stamped out. A bit of peace education is carried out in connection with global education, geography of the third world etc.

5.

AB: Do you think it is at all possible for schools to contribute to a "peace education"? If so, what are some of the steps and measures to be taken that you think of first?

CS: It is possible, but under the present circumstances in Britain, it is very difficult. But in such subjects as English, instead of having a formal examination, the children have to contribute, over a period of two years, about twelve pieces of assignments, which may be reviews looking at different subjects. In my view it would be quite appropriate for them to write assignments on subjects such as AIDS, peace or nuclear war, and indeed this is the way I have brought it in, so far quite successfully.

AB: You see difficulties and you see that there is an opposition to it or anxiety about it. What could be done in order to make the climate more favourable for peace education in Britain?

CS: Very little at the present time, in my opinion. Recently, an organization called "School Watch" was formed. This is looking at what is taught in schools and reports to the Department of Education anything which is regarded as subversive such as peace studies.

6.

AB: What would be some of the possible differences in peace education approaches among younger and older students in schools?

CS: Older students, approaching the age when they are voting, ought to have formal discussions and debates, in which both sides of the argument are put to them.

Pertinent topics would include the issues of nuclear defence, for and against abortion and other things. These are typical examples of issues which youngsters approaching voting age are entitled to discuss.

For the younger students, look at the book which I have written, "Peace", which has a reading age about 7 and interest age of perhaps 7-17. This particular book which is now in its second edition, I would regard as not necessarily controversial. It was first rejected by several publishers, however. Among other things, I sent it to the largest publishers of Bibles in Britain, Collins, and they wrote me back, saying: "You do not seriously expect us to consider the publication of such a politically motivated book."

AB: Do you think peace education would be something for many different subjects in a school, or would it be something that you would think of as being carried out in a specific course?

CS: Something for many different subjects. You have to look at geography - it fits in with the 3rd world issues, development studies, global studies, but it should also be dealt with in science, physics - the effect of breaking up the atom; there are also moral issues involved etc. So it should be dealt with in a wide range of subjects.

7.

AB: <u>If you were an upper-secondary school teacher in a subject with which you are particularly familiar, how would you like to make the students more conscious of and more prepared for problems of peace, within that subject?</u>

CS: English is a subject that gives many possibilities both in terms of reading important texts and letting the students produce texts on vital topics. Films and other media can also easily be brought in. However, the results may sometimes not be what you intend. I might give an example. In a class of girls and boys

of 14-15 I worked as a remedial teacher, assisting the English teacher in charge. The students were shown a film, called "Threads", on the possible effects of a nuclear attack on the city of Sheffield. The film producers, I think, wanted to have the viewers understand that nuclear weapons are too dangerous to be a meaningful defense weapon. But the effect on the children was to upset them very much, there was a period of complete hysteria; and since the film indicated that it was a Soviet bomb, the Russians were blamed and the students wanted to write letters to the Russians asking why they wanted to destroy us etc. So the fact that there are two superpowers threatening each other was completely left out of the picture, and the emotional upheaval was too strong.

8.

AB: In international debates, the terms "disarmament education" and "peace education" have been used, in addition to some other related terms ("global education", "education for international understanding" etc.). Do you have any comments and preferences as to this terminology?

CS: Not particularly. The term that is easiest to get away with at the present time in England is "global education". It is considered O.K. to deal with the third world development, and in this connection it seems natural and permissable also to look at some of the issues of war and peace. So some peace education is permitted under the umbrella of global education, whereas peace studies is dead.

AB: What then would be your distinction between "peace studies" and "peace education"?

CS: In "peace studies" you are teaching only about the issue of peace as a separate subject. "Peace education", on the other hand, can be dealt with in a variety of subjects, debates, assignments, written exercises etc.

9.

AB: In many countries, questions related to disarmament and peace are highly controversial. Would you anticipate any difficulties, for example with parents or other members of the community, when introducing peace education in schools? If so, what kind of difficulties? Do you see any way out of such problems?

CS: Yes, there are big difficulties, as I have already indicated. An example a few years ago: A local education authority issued a circular saying that teachers were not to come into school wearing Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament or Peace badges, nor were they to have any such signs on their cars when they entered school premises. 1500 teachers in the area signed a petition to protest against this. It was then decided that the names of the 1500 teachers would be followed up and the individuals investigated. But then there was a county council election, and the election was lost by the Conservatives and won by the Liberals, and the Chairman of the new education committee was a member of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, so the conditions were suddenly changed.

AB: Do you see some way of handling these difficulties as a teacher?

CS: The moral is that anything controversial has to be dealt with objectively, that is, both sides of any argument have to be illustrated. This is the law which has to be obeyed. But most teachers would obey it by not raising any controversial issues. I don't think that is a good way of handling the problem.

10.

AB: What needs to be done in teacher training in order to prepare future teachers more adequately for the area of "peace education"?

CS: The needs are great, but so far nothing or very

little is done in British teacher training. David Hicks in Lancaster has been a person with some importance and significance in the field. He has written useful articles and manuals on world studies etc., but I do not think he has influenced the teacher training very much.

11.

AB: Is there anything else that you would like to add about the school and peace education?

CS: The international dimension of this work is very important. Teachers from England interested in peace education are usually considered strange and get little positive attention at home. Coming to international conferences, such as those in Copenhagen or Bonn, meeting teachers from other countries with similar concerns, is therefore very encouraging and stimulating. The international movement of Teachers for Peace gives hope for the future.

NOTES ON THE INTERVIEWEE

Chris Sewell. Address: 264 Staines Road, Twickenham, TW2 5AR, UK.

He is an Oxford M.A. and studied Economics and Politics there with the late G.D.H. Cole, the Labour historian.

Chris Sewell teaches children for whom English is a second language at Battersea Park School. He has been an army officer in military intelligence, journalist and long range planner in industry before taking up full time teaching.

He is involved in the co-operative movement and is on the parliamentary panel of the Transport and General Workers' Union. He is an experienced campaigner. He has fought five parliamentary and one E.E.C. election. He served for ten years as a Labour Councilor.

Chris Sewell is involved in "Teachers for Peace" in England and abroad. He is preparing with Soviet, Bulgarian and Filipino teachers an international handbook on how to teach peace. He has written a handbook for teachers on mixed ability teaching. He is preparing an Easy Reader series of books for children. The first of these was entitled "Peace" (Nottingham: Spokesman), containing short illustrated sections about Mother Teresa, Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Albert Einstein and others.

PEACE EDUCATION: A CONVERSATION WITH PATRICIA WHITE, SENIOR LECTURER IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LONDON INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

1.

AB: As an introduction, could you say a few words about yourself and your interest in the field of "peace education"?

PW: I got interested in peace education some years ago. There were practical-political reasons for this, because this was when the Bishop of Salisbury had delivered a lecture at our Institute of Education in London, calling for a political campaign of public education about nuclear weapons, and I thought at that time that this was an area which perhaps I could contribute to as a philosopher. I wrote an article, "Facing the nuclear issues: A task for political education". I had argued previously in other places for political education in democracy, so I went on from this to argue that any political education ought to deal with nuclear issues. My article was published here at the Institute in a collection called "Lessons before Midnight: Educating for reason in nuclear matters" in 1984.

I can mention two other contributions in that book; one is by Barbara Tizard on "Problematic aspects of nuclear education", a very interesting article at the end of the book, and the other is the introduction by Mary Midgley. She is a very well-known British philosopher. Both of these people raised issues which I thought were very important, including the danger that much education about nuclear matters might make people feel despairing, feel that they can't do anything about it - which would be the opposite effect from what's intended.

So again I got interested in what one could say about this, and wrote an article on education about nuclear matters dealing with the question: Is

there any way in which you might teach about these things which would empower people rather than make them feel despairing or desperate?

Then David Hicks asked me to contribute to a handbook on education for peace, in which he wanted me to counter the critics of peace education. I expect you've been long enough in this country to know that we've got very severe critics of peace education. (One of the more prominent publications offering criticism is: Cox, C. & Scruton, R. Peace studies: A critical survey. London: Institute for European Defense and Strategic Studies, 1984.) The more work I do in this area, the more incredible I find it that there is so much opposition to peace education. That seems to me the most amazing thing.

AB: What are otherwise your areas of interest?

PW: Professionally I teach philosophy of education with a special interest in ethics and politics.

2.

AB: What do you think of first when you hear the words "peace education"?

PW: There are two aspects or elements of peace education. One of them you might call the peace studies aspect, where you are concerned with understanding and explaining conflict, causes of war etc. Then there is a rather different, more practical aspect, where you are actually encouraging people to train themselves in solving conflicts creatively, learning to control and manage conflict. Some critics have labeled the second type of peace education "education in good manners", but that seems to me quite wrong - it's far more than that. Both of these aspects ought to be included in schools, giving different weight to different aspects at different times.

AB: How would you like to formulate the aims of such an education?

PW: The goals of both aspects are closely related: On the one hand, an understanding of how conflicts arise at various levels - in the family as well as internationally. On the other hand, I see peace education as very much having a dispositional side. You are concerned with developing dispositions to find non-violent ways to resolve conflicts. I see these two types of ends as very closely related.

3.

AB: If you think back on your own school days, were there some aspects in your schooling that might be considered an attempt at "peace education"?

PW: I went to a fairly traditional school, and attempts at peace education were minimal. We did debate some contemporary issues, which might be slightly related to what I would now see as peace education, but that was just a very small contribution.

4.

AB: Do you believe that schools in your country, as you know them today, contribute to "peace education"?

PW: It is hard to answer in general. All I could say is that I do know schools which I think, certainly on the dispositional side, really are contributing, even though they don't call what they do "peace education". There would also be a number of schools where there is a real attempt to develop a peace education approach. I have no information about how many such schools there are, but my feeling is that there are fairly few.

5.

AB: Do you think it is at all possible for schools to contribute to "peace education"? If so, what are some of the steps and measures to be taken that you think of first?

PW: Yes, schools could contribute. The first measure I would think of would be on the dispositional side,

involving children and others - the whole school - in thinking about how they actually work and live together. That would include experiences in the playground. Pupils may have a break in the morning, a long break at lunch time and a break in the afternoon. These periods in the playground can be a rather horrible experience for some children. One idea would be actually to get the whole school to focus on the playground, to think about experiences in the playground, to think about how the quality of life then might be improved. This I would see as a very concrete contribution to peace education.

But peace education to me is a fairly broad area, which can be handled in many different ways. As to content, it would deal with causes of conflicts, issues of justice and injustice etc.

6.

ÅB: <u>What would be some of the possible differences in peace education approaches among younger and older students in schools</u>?

PW: With younger children, it would be natural to concentrate much more on building up dispositions, attitudes, and handling local sources of conflict, conflicts in the school and conflict in the family. With older students you would be concerned much more with contemporary political issues.

7.

ÅB: <u>If you were an upper-secondary school teacher in a subject with which you are particularly familiar, how would you like to make the students more conscious of and more prepared for problems of peace, within that subject</u>?

PW: If I had the opportunity to deal with philosophy, my own area of interest, there would be a number of relevant issues. There is a growing literature on the philosophical aspects of peace and peace education.

You could discuss whether there can be just wars, and what kind of policy is appropriate in international conflicts. Ethical aspects would be very relevant here. It would also be useful to discuss critically the kinds of arguments seen in newspapers in these areas, trying to increase the students' general skills of argument and making them aware of the kind of language used in propaganda to influence people.

8.

AB: In international debates, the terms "disarmament education" and "peace education" have been used, in addition to some other related terms ("global education", "education for international understanding" etc.). Do you have any comments and preferences as to this terminology?

PW: No, I do not have any strong personal preferences. But - as you have probably discovered already - some of the terms seem to upset people in this country. Some people hate the idea of peace education; some would hate the idea of disarmament education. Obviously some people have substantive criticisms against dealing with this area in school, and it wouldn't matter what you called it. I suppose that among the terms you've got here, the most acceptable one would be "education for international understanding". But even that has its disadvantages because I think you want something broader which also covers conflicts within societies.

AB: Do you yourself use the term "peace education"?

PW: Yes.

AB: Is the term "education for peace" used here?

PW: To some extent, yes. - We now have in many schools programs of personal and social education. There, the kinds of issues we have been talking about would be dealt with to some extent but they wouldn't be specifically focussed upon or labelled as peace education. The time might be spent mainly on handling relationships in school, how you best study, how you make friends etc. It may

also cover aspects of sex education.

9.

ÅB: In many countries, questions related to disarmament and peace are highly controversial. Would you anticipate any difficulties, for example with parents or other members of the community, when introducing peace education in schools? If so, what kind of difficulties? Do you see any way out of such problems?

PW: I think you might well meet with such difficulties. If a school announces that it will introduce a program of peace education, then I think partly because of what parents might have read in the media, they might be worried about indoctrination, that their children would be taught by biased teachers who want to influence the views of the pupils. Some people might feel uneasy about frightening children.

However, I think there is a very straightforward way around these difficulties. The school should present its policy to parents through the kind of communications schools have with parents. I think once parents actually saw what the school was trying to do - that it was trying to give children some understanding of important current matters, and that it was trying to help them to live more peacefully with their fellows, etc. - they would find these efforts perfectly acceptable. So it's largely at the school level a matter of involving parents and making it very clear to them what you are doing and inviting their comments on it.

As for frightening children, anyone who thinks seriously about nuclear weapons will be very frightened indeed (or must have misunderstood something). I cannot think that facing the nuclear issue together with a teacher would increase this fear among older pupils. It is an approach which may offer some hope, a chance to think about doing something.

10.

AB: What needs to be done in teacher training in order to prepare future teachers more adequately for the area of "peace education"?

PW: I would think certainly that peace education ought to be introduced in initial training. There is so much to do in initial training, however, in a short time, that I am not sure that this area could have a very big place, but it certainly should be covered. And certainly it should have a role in in-service teacher education. Experts like David Hicks should of course be involved; but experienced people also learn a lot from one another in in-service training, listening to colleagues saying: Oh, we've got over that problem by doing so and so. Solutions often seem simple, but you haven't thought of it.

Shortly after school, young people in our society attain the right to vote and thus have some influence on political decisions. In order properly to exercise this right, they need to have been politically educated. It seems obvious that issues of peace and war should be attended to in such an education. Both the peace studies aspect and the more practical aspects of peace education should have a central place in the education of the citizens of a democracy. Consequently, this is also an important area for continued efforts in teacher education.

NOTES ON THE INTERVIEWEE

Patricia White. Address: Philosophy of Education Department, 10 Woburn Square, London WC1H 0NS, UK.

Patricia White is Senior Lecturer in Philosophy of Education and works in the Philosophy of Education department of the Institute of Education of the University of London. She is the author of Beyond Domination: An essay in the political philosophy of education (Routledge, 1983) and has recently edited Personal and Social Education: Philosophical perspectives (Kogan Page, 1989). She has also written a number of papers on peace education. Her interest in the practical aspects of peace education in its broadest sense led to her involvement in a project to improve life in the school playground. A part of this work is described in "The Playground Project: A democratic learning experience" in Education: In search of a future (Eds. Hugh Lauder and Phillip Brown, Falmer Press, 1988).

Department of
Educational and
Psychological Research
School of Education
Lund University
Malmö, Sweden

Abstract card

Collinson, H., Masheder, M., Sewell, C., White, P. & The Project "Preparedness for Peace". British perspectives on peace education and its difficulties. Educational and Psychological Interactions (Malmö, Sweden: School of Education), No. 100, 1990.

The project group "Preparedness for Peace" at the Malmö School of Education studies possible ways of helping children and young people to deal constructively with questions of peace and war. As part of the work, the project group conducts interviews with people engaged in the problems of peace education.

This publication presents such interviews with Helen Collinson, Mildred Masheder, Chris Sewell, and Patricia White, four professionals from Great Britain with an active interest in peace education.
- Interviewer: Åke Bjerstedt.

Keywords: Arms trade, conflict resolution, cooperation, Great Britain, history, interviews, non-violence, nuclear warfare, peace education, philosophy, political education, teacher education, teaching methods.

Reference card

Collinson, H., Masheder, M., Sewell, C., White, P. & The Project "Preparedness for Peace". British perspectives on peace education and its difficulties. Educational and Psychological Interactions (Malmö, Sweden: School of Education), No. 100, 1990.